There are some things I want to assure you of at the outset:

One, I'm not running for president.

Two, I have no ties with the CIA.

Three, I am not now nor have I ever been a member of or associated in any other way with The Fund for Animals, ~~[The Friends of Animals, or the Vegetarians of America.]~~

I have asked myself the question, what am I doing here? I guess there are several reasons.

One is, I was invited.

Another is that I think it's important to respond to the response to The Day of Autumn.

Another possible reason is that I'm tired of being shot at.

Since you've invited me here, perhaps you should know something more about me. Judging from some of the

mail I've received during the past few months & best begin by attesting to one, my patriotism, and two, my manhood.

As for my regional bias — this New Yorker was born in West Virginia, raised in California, and has lived and worked in Massachusetts Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Washington DC. (And) the only job I've had in my adult life is being a reporter.

In that line of work I've made several television news documentaries — about health care, advertising, dissent in the Soviet Union, China, politics in the South, and football among others — and if any of you would like to discuss any of those subjects, I'd be delighted.

But I have the feeling that the reason I was invited here today is to discuss a recent documentary about hunting.

I believe its important for me to be here — for us to see and hear each other and I'm sorry our time is so short. I sometimes get the feeling that some of you may have the notion that CBS News is some faceless, nameless institution composed of shadowy figures — totally unlike yourselves — and dedicated to dibarng the virtues of mom and apple pie. Well, that might serve all of us at one time or another as a convenient image, but it is a false one. I know my colleagues — at CBS and elsewhere — to be hard working men and women — professionally trained and of your experience — who are not infallible, who have feelings, and opinions, and points of view and who do everything humanly possible to separate those frailties from their given assignments — who do their best to cover and report events of interest and concern to you — usually — ~~the subject~~ (subjects) not of their own choosing. — which is how I came

to spend a year on the subject of hunting.

It is a subject to which I had never given a moment's thought. Some have suggested that that immediately disqualifies me from reporting about it — that no one had ever suggested that because I am not a doctor I could not report on health care, or because I am not a advertiser I could not report about advertising, or because I am not a politician I could not report on the political process or because I am not Chinese I could not report about China.

So, what ~~I was~~ you do. In every instance, we look to people who are doctors, and advertisers and politicians, and are Chinese — and hunters — and to those who have made those subjects their concern, to those who hold different points of view and those who hold no point of view

So how do we do it? Invariably, with a lot of research, a lot of legwork, and — in my case — with an excess of cigarettes and coffee. We seek out the people who are involved — expert and layman — listen to what they have to say, read what they have written — persons with as many different perspectives and viewpoints on a subject as we can find. So it was in the preparation of The Sum of Autumn.

During that preparation we had the temerity to read a book by Cleveland Amory. It was not the only book we read that is critical of hunting in one way or another. We did read such books. We read a great many books, the great majority of which are in no way critical of hunting — among them: Meditations on Hunting, Game Management, Hunter's Digest, The Hunter's Field Guide, North American Big Game, The Ben East Hunting Book, Man the Hunter, the NRA Hunting Annuals and the monthly issues of the outdoor magazines.

We talked to people who are critical of hunting or of some aspects of hunting, and a great many people who are not — including A. Starker Leopold, a noted professor and outdoorsman whose father wrote the book of game management, spokesmen for the Wildlife Management Institute, the Natl. Shooting Sports Foundation, the Natl. Rifle Assn., the No. American Game Breeders and Shooting Preserve Operators Assn., the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, the Pa. Federation of Sportsmen's clubs, the Utah Wildlife Federation, of Remington and Winchester-Western, the Dept. of Interior, many state game department officials — and a great many hunters — almost all of them of long experience and representing a cross-section of American professionally, economically + geographically.

It was not difficult to find points of view. Rarely have I had to deal with a subject where passions are so high, reason so elusive, and a middle ground so hard to find.

Judging from the response we've had, to please the partisan anti-hunter & suppose we would have had to spend 90 minutes covering the illegalities and abuses of hunting:

1. on poaching in its various forms:
   ① shooting wildlife out of season
   ② speeding bag limits
   ③ the jacklighting of game
2. on the shooting of wildlife from roads and moving vehicles
3. on the wounding + crippling of wildlife
4. on the lead poisoning of waterfowl
5. on trespassing + vandalism
6. on the shooting of non-game species
7. on illegal baiting practices
8. and on some ~~illegal~~ legal practices such as the use of towns and animal drives.

And to please the partisan hunter, & suppose we would have had to spend

90 minutes or a picture of one man, or two, sitting (or walking) in utter isolation, not once lifting rifle or shotgun to shoulder.

We did not by design or pre-conception seek out — or cover — the ideal any more than we did the extreme — nor any one kind of hunt, or hunter. Nor do we assume, nor did the broadcast claim, that any documentary, or any subject, is an all-inclusive report. (Nor, judging from the response we've received, are partisans on either side of the subject overly concerned with having every possible aspect of it reported — only those aspects which support their particular point of view. It is therefore with some relief that it would seem that we have pleased no one.)

In any case, giving pleasure certainly is the role or function of the journalist. Why do we cover and report on any subject? Well, most simply,

we ask ourselves, is it important enough? & it justified because of its social, a economic, or historical importance? Does it involve or concern enough people? Does it touch our lives? The subject of hunting seemed to qualify on all journalistic grounds — and, again, the response generated would seem to confirm that.

Let me give you an idea of what some of that response has been:

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

And those are some of the nicer things that have been said about me, and all right – that goes with the job, and yes, everyone does have the right to his or her opinion.

But some things have been said, and printed, that go beyond opinion and name calling and must, I feel, be called to account. I'm sure there are those among you who are angry – well, there are some things that disturb me too. There has been a litany of charges and assumptions made not about me but about the broadcast – repeated mostly by outdoor writers who, unlike the Kiwanis Club of Augusta, Maine, have never bothered to talk to me about it or to check the facts. (I have had to wonder if many of them have even seen the broadcast.) Among those charges are these:

(1) that we staged events, or parts of them: that we arranged for, even paid for, even used paid actors for at least some of the events reported in the broadcast; we did not, not once;

(2) that some of the sound — particularly of gunshots — was not real, that we dubbed in sound effects for gunfire or ~~the~~ a dying animal; we did not.

(3) that ~~we~~ — either out of ignorance or pre-meditated malice — we sought out ~~only~~ the so-called plot hunter, usually when drunk; we did not, nor did we ever see a film a drunken hunter.

(4) that we misrepresented the purpose of the film, and furthermore claimed it it was to be part of a celebration of the nation's bicentennial; we did not.

(5) that we knowingly and purposefully conspired with anti-hunters to present

their point of view about hunting, and deliberately set out to discredit the sport of hunting and to deprive Americans of their firearms; we did not.

If any of those things were true, I would not be here today — I'd be out looking for work.

Finally, there have been raised a couple of other questions which I believe are important to clarify.

One is the apparently common belief that there is a connection between the sponsors of a news broadcast and its content. I have read letter after letter swearing never again to buy the products of the sponsor who remained in the broadcast or the sponsors who did not — depending on the point of view of the writer. Sponsors have nothing to do with the preparation or content of a news broadcast — documentary or otherwise — nor do they even see it before it is

Speak for CBS news

aired. They are buying time in a news program and nothing more. Mr ~~[illegible]~~ had having - a person after a news program ~~[illegible]~~ anyway whether ~~[illegible]~~ on the air. ~~[illegible]~~ will be made a ~~[illegible]~~. ~~[illegible]~~ and ~~[illegible]~~ they are. It will not.

When commercial time is not filled, CBS as well as the other networks, usually fill that time in one of two ways — which brings me to the second question that has been raised in this area. That time is then filled either by promotion of other network programs — or by giving free air time to a wide range of generally recognized service and charitable organizations — which have no advanced warning of or control over when these messages will be run. One of these organizations is the United Way. I have seen many letters condemning the United Way — and have even received a phone call from a United Fund chairman in North Carolina

appealing for help — because one of its public service announcements was run during the Bern of Autumn.

This is not the first time the U. W. has been a target — a few years ago a similar campaign was waged against it because the natl. board of the YWCA had issued a statement regarding gun control

The United Fund had nothing to do either with the program or with the fact the network ran one of its messages during the program. It is an innocent victim.

And speaking of innocent victims, I would be glad to turn the rest of the program back to you.